5: Harrison D-4 (1912-1924) 1924 M1 Middle East
Bedouin MJ4



forth scornfully triumphant over the worst that environment can do to him. There is no division of labor in the desert. Every man has the same occupation and is pursued by the same gaunt specter of starvation. Every man breathes the same atmosphere of the great free desert and shares the same conceptions of God and His terrible omnipotence. How could men be otherwise than equal when they all live in the same desert and worship the same God? The hypocrisies and pretenses of caste and rank cannot live long in that country where God is so great and so terrible and so omnipotent and where men at the best are helpless insects in His hands.

The Arab is perhaps the most incorrigible individualist that the world affords. He regards any abridgement of his liberty as intolerable. His desert is a land of freedom. Everybody does what is right in his own eyes with perhaps less restraint than anywhere else in the world. To one who is familiar with the Orient, perhaps the most significant fact to be noted in Arab society is the complete absence of the caste system. The Arab knows nothing about caste. His sheikh, who has the power of life and death over him, the Bedouin regards as on precisely his own level. He expects this sheikh to rule well, to have a heavy hand for offenders, to maintain relations with neighboring tribes, to protect the poor from the rapacity of the rich. If the sheikh does not do all these things, he will join cheerfully with his comrades in assassinating him and will submit with equal cheerfulness to whomsoever may be his successor. He would be not at all nonplussed if asked to be ruler himself; quite possibly he might fill the office with credit. All this he knows, as does his sheikh. The result is a society where there is almost no feeling of superiority and inferiority,

21: Fisher S-4 (no date) 1950 M1 Middle East Bedouin M34



264 On occasion when supplies are plentiful the Badawin
146 eat copiously, because the time and scale of the next meal may be
147 uncertain. In general, the standard of nutrition of the Badawin is low—in the opinion of some, below the level necessary in other regions to sustain life. As a result, the Badawin are small, even stunted, and lightly built, though their physical powers and endurance are great. Life is, however, very hard; and by forty, particularly in the case of women, old age has begun. Fifty years is a long life for a nomad.

721 One means of supplementing the deficiencies in arid areas is by raiding. Amongst Badawin the *rhazw* (*razzia* or *rezzou*) is a recognised activity amounting almost to sport, but it also fulfils a definite economic function. The effects of a bad season are mitigated, as when rains have failed in the desert, the Bedu has a choice of taking what he requires by force from other people, or of starving. The word 'sport' has been used, because although fundamentally a serious matter, Badawin raids are conducted under certain conventions—almost, one might say, rules.[1] Rapid, unlooked-for coups, using cunning and guile, are most favoured: bloodshed is as far as possible avoided, though goods, womenfolk, and children become the property of the victors under a kind of slavery. Successful leadership in tribal raids
● [554] is the means by which personal reputation and power is built up: King Ibn Saud, originally a dispossessed desert nomad, has gained absolute power in Arabia through successful tribal encounters on an increasingly
721 large scale. Badawin raids may be directed against other tribes, but
651 frequently, toll is levied on agricultural settlements on the fringe of the desert. Less able to resist, and with more at stake than the nomad, settled cultivators sometimes remain under permanent tribute to Badawin tribes, and supply a quantity of needed foodstuffs to their overlords. The name *khaoua* (tribute of friendship) is applied to such transactions. Raiding is now declining, because of increasing control by local governments, but in addition to the political problem presented in controlling outbreaks, there is the economic factor of providing alternative occupation to ensure a livelihood.[2] Though declining, the practice is still not extinct. For as recently as 1946, J. C. Crowfoot could write, 'Arabs are now raiding each other in Fords and Chevrolets'.

[1] There are only three sources of amusement or distraction in Badawin life: conversation round a coffee hearth, family life, and raiding.

[2] Cf. the decline in population of the Barbary coastlands since the suppression of piracy in the Mediterranean. There, precisely the same economic factor was involved.

,21: Fisher S-4 (no date) 1950 M1 Middle East
Badouin MJ4



Strict discipline, necessary both in everyday routine and because of liability to attack, has left its mark on Badawin ways of thought. In religion, there is little room for compromise or doubt—a strong, vivid, and intolerant faith is held. Similarly, there is a strict code of behaviour. Hospitality, in an environment without fixed routes or settlements, is a highly regarded virtue, and ordinary social intercourse has been developed into an elaborate code of manners and conduct. In view of the vagaries of human existence amongst the Badawin, it is hardly surprising that superstition and fatalism are also strongly marked. The operation of the 'evil eye' and malevolent spirits is seen in every-day life—nothing is praised directly without attributing its excellence as due to God—and men and animals wear charms.[1]

Possibly as a result of reduced physical strength, and their enforced preoccupation with household tasks, the status of women is low. Although not veiled, like the women of the settled areas, Badawin women are regarded as in all things the inferiors of men. It may be significant that among pastoral communities, religious deities are regarded as masculine in attribute. Only in the religious systems of non-pastoral peoples do we find female deities—mother-goddesses of wide influence—with a corresponding rise in importance of women above the level of mere drudges and bearers of children.

Though Badawin life is hard and unrewarding, those who follow it value it highly. A true Bedu looks down with disdain on other ways of life, particularly that of cultivators in better watered districts, for whom he often has a profound contempt as effete and subservient. Despite their own strict social organisation, the Badawin can contrast the dull routine of agricultural practice, and the looseness and self-indulgence of city life with their own courage, independence of thought, abstemiousness, and mobility.

Nomadism is a special response to environment, by which the frontier of human occupation is pushed farther within a region of increasing difficulty. In the past, nomadism has often been regarded as an unsatisfactory alternative to agriculture; it was believed that primitive man passed from a life of hunting and collecting first into a stage of pastoralism, and later, in places where conditions were favourable, to the fullest development of a life based on cultivation. In the opinion of H. J. Fleure and others this view must be modified—pastoralism may, in some instances, represent a special, later development *from* agriculture—a dynamic response to environmental

[1] Even Arab taxis in the cities carry a charm on the radiator.

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala
Beduins MJ4



man back to Aleppo, with his "wild ostrich", happy and contented.

Here, too, rain had fallen and transfigured the arid, yellow wastes into lush green meadows. From the small band of Shammar, our guide borrowed riding-camels for our further journey, and we reached the camp of Mishal ibn Faris on the following day. Of Mishal the Arabs say that "no cloud can be compared with him for generosity." I, too, must say that I have seldom met so unselfish and kind-hearted a man.

Outside his large tent we drew up and dismounted. How many guest fires must have been lighted under this smoke-blackened roof, which had sheltered three generations!

The elderly *sheykh* stood on the threshold and bade me welcome with the sacred formula of the wilderness, the assurance of peace, "Salam Alayk."

I responded in the manner of the desert: "God keep thee well." Then, Mishal ibn Faris took with his own hand the headstall from my mare and hung it on the main post of his tent. He had wanted to know me, he said, as soon as he had heard that a stranger, who loved Arab horses, was visiting the Tai'.

I thanked him for his pleasant and friendly invitation. In his way of addressing me there was more than ordinary politeness. From now on, whether with them in person, or far away, I had the freedom of his tribe.

Mishal ibn Faris, the great Shammar *sheykh*, esteemed from one end of the desert to the other for his staunch righteousness, had a peaceful and moderating influence on Bedouin politics, both in Mesopotamia and Syria. "A

1: Raswan T-3 (1913-35) 1947 MD4 Rwala Bedouins MJ4



man without a single enemy", Arabs have called him to me. 157 534

I was Mishal's guest for several weeks. In the company of his son Naif, I was able to look over a large number of Arab horses amongst the different Shammar clans. One two-year-old Saqlawi-Shaifi stallion of purest blood pleased me exceedingly. One day I enquired of the *sheykh's* secretary if he thought it possible that Mishal would sell this stallion. It had indeed come to my ears that Mishal had refused an offer of eight hundred gold pounds from the French Remount Service. From my experience, I knew that really thoroughbred Arab horses were quite rare and therefore exceedingly expensive. Considering the stallion's breeding, the French offer certainly did not appear too high, when one remembers that foreign military commissions and breeders have paid in the desert anything up to three thousand pounds gold for blue-blooded stallions. 231 435

I asked the scribe to submit my offer to his *sheykh* up to one thousand pounds gold. I also declared myself ready to make the customary presents to the *katib* (secretary) and to the slave who had looked after the stallion from birth. [431]

That same day I sat with Mishal and his son Naif and their friends until late into the night. By the light of the campfire I showed them photographs of Arab horses, among them the stallions and mares which I had bought from the stud of Lady Anne Blunt's daughter in England, for the ranch in California. 574 231 572

"Is it known to thee," asked Mishal, "that Lord Blunt and my father Faris formed a blood brotherhood fifty

12: Glubb G-3 (1930-1946) 1948 MG1 Jordan
BEDOUINS MJ 4



desert country, full of tribes which recognized the authority of no government. Without the assistance of this old man, it might be impossible to proceed. Even so, I felt that I could with dignity wait no longer, and I signalled to my two companions. We rose, walked out of the tent to our camels, and began to adjust the saddles and prepare to mount. But a slave ran out to us and, pulling Ibn Hadhdhal's man by the sleeve, he led him back to the tent. Apparently he persuaded the shaikh that we were harmless, for we were invited back, and Al Nuri himself so far unbent as to say, "You are welcome! We are always glad to see the English!" This appeared to use up his available conversation, and he soon afterwards disappeared. We spent the rest of the day strolling about, talking to the slaves and tribesmen, or sitting amongst bales of cloth and tobacco in the tiny tent of an itinerant merchant from the Iraq desert oasis of Kubaisa.

Al Nuri was a tremendous personality who maintained despotic control over his tribe. His authority was notorious, and the Ruwallah were frequently laughed at by other tribes for their tame submission to such autocracy. One such story related how a man of the tribe, summoned in the tomb by the recording angels to give an account of his actions on earth, replied, "I am only a dead Ruweili, and all claims are settled by Ibn Shaalan." But although a redoubtable champion in action (he had murdered his elder brother in order to make himself shaikh of the tribe), he did not, like most Arabs, possess the gift of conversation.

The authority which Ibn Shaalan wielded over the Ruwallah was probably unique amongst bedouins, and was due to personal fear of this formidable old man. The Arab tribesman will accord theoretical and verbal respect to the old families of chiefs, but he will rarely accord them obedience in practice. He constantly opposes and argues against his shaikh. Not infrequently he loses his temper, creates a violent scene and hastens to strike his tent and move away to join the following of some other chief who will treat him with more consideration. Amongst bedouins freedom always tended to degenerate into anarchy—but free they were—freer perhaps than any other race in the world.

In happy England we have come, for centuries past, to identify our personal liberties with the political independence of our

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4



him to make his escape to safety, if necessary calling in all his own family for the purpose. Or if the *qasir* says he will pay blood money in settlement, then the protector must protect him until the negotiations are put through.

If a *qasir's* tribe declares war on his protector's tribe, and later the *qasir's* camels are captured by raiders belonging to the protector's tribe, then the latter is absolved from returning the camels and vice versa, unless both protector and his *qasir* make public declaration before their respective shaikhs that they are tent-neighbours (*qusara*) and each will make good any damage suffered by the other party. If, then, the tribe of either party accidentally or purposely captures camels or mares from either of the men, they must return the loot when asked to do so.

The protector must make this public declaration to his own shaikh in person, and if the *qasir* cannot get through himself he must send neutral messengers to his own shaikh and people and do likewise.

Should the protector have in his employ a strange Badawin to herd his camels or sheep, and raiders of the herdsman's tribe suddenly appear and carry off the herd, then because the man in charge is their own fellow-tribesman the raiders must restore three she-camels to the herdsman, one for riding on and two for milking.

Certain desert tribes, notably the Dhafir, are particularly proud of the name they have won for protecting their tent-neighbours. They have become famous in this respect, as the following stories will show. (The chief actors in both cases were well known to me, though Hamud al Suwait has now been dead some years.)

The uncle of Hamud al Suwait, the Shaikh of all the Dhafir tribe, once threatened in public *majlis*, to impale himself on his sword which he had drawn for the purpose, unless *his own son* were brought before him and slain in his presence, because the son had killed his tent-neighbour in the heat of a foolish quarrel. The various members of the family tried hard to shield the youth, but realising that the old shaikh was in deadly earnest, Hamud al Suwait (he became shaikh after his uncle's death two years later) himself seized the boy and with his own hand cut him down before the eyes of his father. Thus was tribal honour satisfied. This incident happened in 1912, and was told

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Bedouins MJ4



554 me by Shaikh Hamud himself, and later vouched for by the Shaikh
619 of Kuwait on 9th September, 1932.
622 Shaikh Jada'an al Suwait, who succeeded to the Shaikhship of the
628 Dhafir after the death of Hamud, was camped near Athaiba and
577 Ruhail on the Kuwait–Iraq border in 1931. Hearing that one of his own tribesmen had fired at and wounded a Mutairi tribesman who was his *qasir* at the time, even though the Mutair tribe and the Dhafir tribe were open enemies, Shaikh Jada'an had the offending tribesman brought before him, and with his own hand slashed him over the head with his sword.

The deed flashed through the Badawin world like lightning at the time, and Jada'an's name, as the upholder of Badawin honour, [582] became almost as famous as that of his forbear. Unfortunately the Iraq authorities, with that folly which has frequently characterised them in dealing with the high-spirited tribesmen of the desert, imprisoned Shaikh Jada'an for several weeks, before they saw that they were making a martyr of a desert hero. This act cost them his allegiance. Shortly after, Shaikh Jada'an went over to Bin Sa'ud, taking half the tribe with him.

Shaikh Jada'an told me the story himself, saying that he only acted as he did in order to keep the vital Badawin law clean and untarnished.

So greatly have the Dhafir tribe preserved and guarded their good name in the above respect, that it is said of Mana, another famous Shaikh of the Dhafir, that the immediate cause of his death was the news (which was brought to him as he was riding home from a raid), that a certain well-known guest of the tribe had, in his absence, been attacked and slain. Certain it is that on being told what had happened, his heart seemed to stop beating and he fell forward on to his camel's neck and rolled to the ground a dead man. His daughter, whom I met in 1935, told me that the old man had literally died of a broken heart, and her words were vouched for by her husband, Shaikh Hautush al Suwait, cousin of Jada'an.

621 I myself have only once been appealed to by a person who was
671 my *qasir*. I am glad to say that the results were eminently satisfactory.
577 It happened on this wise. I was in Kuwait, and it was in the hot month of July 1932, when everyone was sleeping on the roof at night. I was sleeping outside the old Agency dining-room, over the cook's quarters.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4

CHAPTER XXVI

# Badawin Warfare

*Raiding is the breath of life to the* Badawin. Prevent him from raiding 721
and he becomes the most melancholy of men.

Just as in the civilised West man must have his various sports, football, cricket, tennis, shooting, etc., to keep himself fit and happy, so in Arabia the primitive Badawin must have his raids. These denote to him everything that is manly and sporting.

A famous raider is honoured above all men, and boys and young [554]
men pine for the day when they will be allowed to accompany their elders on forays, and so win their spurs.

Raiding brings out all that is hard, brave and skilful in man, so the occupation is honoured and encouraged, just as everything tending to make a man soft and effeminate is despised by all true desert men.

Desert raids do not as a rule entail much bloodshed. Raiders are 721
primarily inspired by greed for camels, and with this goes the desire 422
to score off their enemies. To lift an enemy's camels is the best way of all to hurt him and add to the raider's own stock, for a Badawin values his camels above everything.

There is no such thing in ordinary desert warfare as men fighting 726
"to the death" or making a "last stand" in defence of wives, children and stock. That would be merely foolish. The Badawin appreciates at once the odds against him. If he knows he can drive off the raider he will stand and do so; if, on the other hand, he sees that he has no chance, he will desert family and camels and bolt into the desert to live to fight another day. He knows his women and children will be safe, why then risk certain death by fighting against odds? He allows his camels to be taken knowing his turn will come another day. *Nakhud wa narwakhid* (We take and are ourselves taken) is his creed.

This is no reflection on the Badawin's courage. He is a brave man, but he has no false notions of standing up against an obviously superior force till he is killed.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4



567

Speaking generally, however, bought slaves are the rule.

A desert shaikh will keep a certain number of *'abíd* whom he has received as a gift from some prince or fellow-shaikh, or has himself bought in Mecca when on the Haj. A woman slave is called a *jdriah* among the tribes, and not an *'abda*, which is the term used in the towns.

The Najd and Northern Badawin treat their bought slaves far better than the slave-owning fraternity generally. Being a born gentleman, and as a rule far more religious than his town brother, the desert man has a natural inclination to treat his slave well. The latter has, of course, to work and take his full share in drawing water for sheep and camels, and cutting brushwood for the use of the tent. Since he can stand the summer heat better than the Arab, he does a lot of the work connected with the care and tending of camels when his master and mistress are camped on water during the hot season.

622
As Mr. Rutter so forcibly puts it, the shaikh of a tribe is above all things patriarchal, he loves to feel that he is the head of the tribe, 567
the father and mother of his own particular *hamula*. He gets satis- 554
faction from feeling that members of his family, and especially his servants and slaves, are for ever dancing attendance on him, and depend on him for a thousand and one things connected with the daily round of life. He likes to think that at the two annual *'Ids* or festivals it will be he who will disburse largesse in the shape of presents of clothing (*kiswah*), foodstuffs (*ta'am*) and so forth, to those depending on him. Just as he is always out to gain a following and increase it, because it gives him prestige, power and honour among his fellows, so he increases the number of his slaves where he can, as they give him definitely added strength in the eyes of his fellow Arabs.

According to Shaikh Hillal bin Faja'an of the Mutair (7th January, 1935) this is the code of the desert man where slaves are concerned:

(*a*) Slaves are good *chessib* (*kessib*) or spoil when tribes are at war. In this sense they are counted as camels.

(*b*) Normally a body of riders on a camel-lifting expedition will not worry to carry off a single slave man found in charge of grazing camels. The raiders will merely bind and leave him, as he would hinder rapid movement.

(*c*) It is lawful, if you are at enmity with another tribe, to steal slave children and make them yours. Unwritten law insists, however, that such children be over ten years of age. Of course the owner

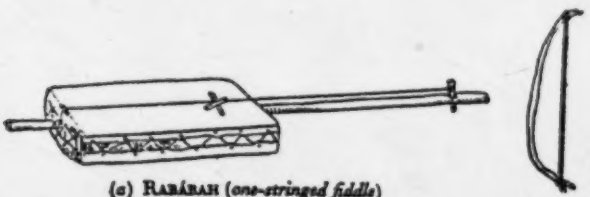
k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4



535 852 kept her lips tightly shut, and occasionally placed her hand over her nose and mouth. If the male dancer approached her, as he did on several occasions in rather "loud" fashion, the girl struck him lightly with her cane as if to drive him back. A feature was the girl's rouged lips, and a bright saffron-coloured streak half an inch broad down the centre parting of her hair. They all had this, and it looked like saffron paint (probably strong solution of henna). The dance ended by the girl's brother rushing into the ring and covering his sister's head and face with a portion of her voile garment, and taking her away.

### THE RABÁBAH

534 The *rabábah*, or Badawin guitar, was once universally used among the Badawin tribes of Arabia. The minstrels were men of an inferior tribe, or of the servant class, such as Sanas and the like. With the spread of Wahhabism and the rise of the fanatical 'Ikhwan in 1919, the decree went forth that the *rabábah* was a sign of sin, and it was



(*a*) Rabábah (*one-stringed fiddle*) (*b*) Bow

banned entirely. The Northern Shammar, Dhafir and 'Anizah tribes, who were scarcely affected by the puritan revival, still continued to use the *rabábah* freely, getting the servants and retainers to play for them, and with the collapse of 'Ikhwanism after the rebellion and defeat of Faisal al Duwish in 1930, listening to the *rabábah* and the singing of war and love songs by the Sana sections of the tribes, appears to be once again slowly taking hold. To-day, 1937, some of the Rashaida, Hirshan and 'Awazim are definitely taking to it again. The Sulubba and Kauliyah (Gipsies of Iraq) have always used it, even in the days of ultra-Wahhabism, and perhaps this is why it was considered the instrument of the low-born.

534 535 554 To accompany women and girls dancing, only a chorus of women

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins M''



singers is used, never the *rabábah*. Men never dance to the tune of the instrument, but only sing to it, either singly or in unison, repeating the words of the soloist, and keeping time by clapping their hands. 534 535 554

It is definitely considered undignified for a pure-bred Arab to play the *rabábah*, and must always be so.

### FORTUNE-TELLING AND PROPHECY 787

Fortune-telling and prophecy are commonly practised among Badawin women, the Sulubba especially. A common Mutairi method of telling fortunes (more as a means of amusement than as a serious forecast) is similar to that practised by our gipsies and old folk at home. Cards are not used, but shells, date-stones, bits of pottery, etc., all jumbled together and cast at random on the ground are used to tell a person's fortune.

Maneira Mutairi (Sana) frequently entertained us in camp with her bag of fortune-telling articles. She used

3 large cowrie shells (with backs missing).

3 cowrie shells with backs missing (small size).

9 Zababit sea-shells with faces broken off, e.g.

1 piece of blue pottery ½" to 1" in diameter.

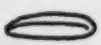
1 piece of red pottery ½" to 1" in diameter.

5 date stones.

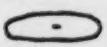
The blue piece of pottery represented the sea.

The red piece of pottery represented the land.

A date stone represented a woman.



A date stone with back uppermost represented a man.



A date stone if it fell sideways on ground represented a camel.

k Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins A1J4
Saudi Arabia MJ1

## Appendix XIII

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6. Hijáz | .. .. .. | Tussun Pasha, 1811 | } of Egypt. |
| 7. Hijáz | .. .. .. | Mohomed 'Ali Pasha, 1815 | |
| 8. Qasím and Najd | .. .. | Ibrahim Pasha, 1817 | |
| 9. Asír | .. .. .. | Ahmad Pasha of Turkey, 1835. | |
| 10. Hasa | .. .. .. | Turkish expedition under Maz'aid Pasha as Sa'adun from Iraq, 1871–2. | |
| 11. Qasím | .. .. .. | Turkish expedition from Iraq, 1903–5. | |
| 12. Madain Salih and Wadi Sirhan | | Lawrence's operations during Great War, 1916–18. | |

APPENDIX XIII

### MARRIAGE BETWEEN SHARÍF AND NON-SHARÍF ARABS

On 17th January, 1938, Shaikh Mirshid ibn Twála of the Shammar, in discussing whom a pure Arab could marry, told me that an Arab like himself could not possibly marry a Sulubbi girl, or an 'Awazim, Rashaida or Hutaim lass. His people, the Shammar, would kill him if he did.

He added that it was true that the Amir 'Abdul 'Aziz al Rashid, ruler in Hail, had once lost his head and enjoyed for a few hours only a beautiful Sulubbi maiden, as he supposed, *without the knowledge of anyone*. He did not even marry her, but took her sinfully, added Mirshid. What was the result? The news got about, and Ibn Shurraim and all his tribe left him —Ibn Twála and all his followers did likewise and moved north into Iraq. Agáb ibn 'Ijil and his Abda sections did the same, never to come back. In fact all the Saiyah group of Shammar in protest deserted their hereditary lord in a body.

Apart from marriage with a low-born Arab woman, certain trades considered dishonourable for a pure-bred Arab to take up were forbidden him. These included, said Shaikh Mirshid, ironmongering (Sána trade), carrying and making salt, burning *juss* (lime), skinning animals and curing the skins, and burning charcoal.

To quote an example: Shaikh Mubarak found a very poor man of 'Anizah extraction burning *juss* one day. He sent for him and upbraided him, saying that he should not do a low-born Arab's work. The man, a very poor man, replied that he had to make his living, for he had a family to support,

H. Dickson G-5 (1929-47) 1951 MI 1 Kuwait
Bedouins MJ4



and if he did not do the work he did, they would starve. Shaikh Mubarak rejoined sternly that if he persisted he would have to drive him out of the State or have him killed. Shaikh Mubarak al Subah, like all the Subah, was also of 'Anizah extraction and was adamant.

## APPENDIX XIV

## THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN SHAKESPEAR, LATE P.A., KUWAIT

I have mentioned that the battle of Jaráb in which the above officer was killed took place in the spring of 1915.

K. B. Mulla Salih of Kuwait, with whom I discussed the question, said that this was correct, making the date ever closer by saying that on 19th November, 1914, and whilst our troops were still at Saihan opposite Mohammerah, Shakespear visited Sir P. Cox and Sir Arthur Barrett, the G.O.C. at Army H.Q., and from there took his orders to go into Naid and visit Bin Sa'ud.

Shakespear started from Kuwait when the Viceroy, Lord Harding, arrived in Iraq (January–February 1915). As Lord Harding was due to visit Kuwait after seeing Basra and the troops there, Shaikh Mubarak tried to dissuade Shakespear from going till the Viceroy had left Kuwait. He failed to do so, and it was when Lord Harding was in Kuwait (February 1915) that news reached the town that Shakespear had fallen at Jaráb whilst helping to man one of Bin Sa'ud's guns.

Shaikh Mubarak, who had been trying previously to get Bin Sa'ud to come in and pay respects to the Viceroy, was later able to say to Bin Sa'ud —"I told you so. You would not take my advice, and not only failed to see the Viceroy, but you lost a battle and made me lose my Political Agent."

The death of Shakespear may therefore be fixed as having taken place in the *latter part of February* 1915.

13: Theiger T-3 (ca. 1949) 1950 MJI Sand: Arabia
Bedouin Mid



181 thoroughbreds. No race prizes lineage higher, yet they are the most
554 democratic people in the world and the most individualistic. Among
177 them there is real equality. To certain families, by virtue of their descent,
577 they accord certain privileges, but as a courtesy, not as a right, and Badu sheikhs command respect only as long as they merit it. The traditional Arab way of life, fast vanishing to-day in contact with the West, owed much to Badu concepts, for the villagers and townsmen of Arabia, who form by far the greater part of her population, live close to the desert and were profoundly affected by it until motor-cars and aeroplanes removed for ever the need for camel journeys. Most of them are, indeed, of Badu origin, for the desert tides have always stranded the weak and broken upon the fringes of the Sown. Everywhere the Arabs have, at all times, judged honour and chivalry and hospitality by the standards of the tribesmen. Their love of liberty, their freedom from prejudice of class and caste, and their enthusiasm for poetry have come to them from the desert.

157 It is impossible to assess the character of the Badu, for among no other
577 race have so many contradictory qualities been fused together. I myself
81 have witnessed their courage and self-reliance, their endurance and pride of race, and I remember their patience, generosity, and unselfishness. But often I have been exasperated by their avarice and wearied by their endless
[135] importunities. No Badu thinks it shame to beg, and usually he will look disparagingly at the gift which he has received and grumble, "Is this all
[137] that you are going to give me?" Grasping and avaricious, they will talk unceasingly of money and argue heatedly for days about a dollar, then they will slaughter a camel worth 150 dollars to feed a stranger. Loyal to each other, they are yet without regard for human life and will knife an unarmed herdsboy with a jest. Cheerful and easily amused, they are generally good-tempered, though passionate when roused and quick to resent an injury.

166 I have often wondered as I rode across the desert what the future, and even the immediate future, holds for my companions and their kinsmen. The discovery of oil on the Persian Gulf is going to affect them profoundly and make it impossible for them to continue in their old ways, even if they would. I think myself that the oilfields will empty the desert. This movement of tribes from the Yaman and the Hadhramaut towards the north and the north-east is a movement which has been going on for thousands of years. It probably started even before the great migration of the Qahtan tribes, when, overwhelmed by calamity in their homes round Marib, some of them pushed across the deserts and occupied Oman. In recent years tribes such as the Awamir, Ruashid, and Manahil have left their homelands in the steppes to the north-east of the Hadhramaut and moved out into the sands to escape from the incursions of more powerful
166 tribes pressing on them from the west. Having accustomed themselves to
177 life in the sands, they have penetrated ever further and further into the Empty Quarter. In the past twenty or thirty years as conditions have become more settled in the north, due to the extension of Ibn Saud's influence over the powerful Murra tribe, they have grazed their herds round the Liwa oasis and in the sands near the Trucial Coast. Now the money to be earned on the oilfields along the Gulf is drawing the Badu

13: Thesiger T-3 (ca. 1949) 1950 MJ1 Saudi Arabia
Bedouin MJ4



world. In the past, Arab rulers were always accessible to their subjects, and the most destitute Badui was accustomed to enter the audience chamber of an all-powerful king and address him by name, scorning the use of titles. Now these rulers may be tempted to seclude themselves in offices and to interpose a convenient façade of secretaries between themselves and the importunities of the needy and the oppressed. It is significant of the changes which are taking place that customary banquets are already being replaced by meals at which delicacies brought specially from America by air are served in European fashion.

Freedom is the birthright of the nomad. If he should be dispossessed, disillusioned, and yet remain as poverty-stricken as he was before, he might readily be induced to believe that Communism offered him a society similar to that which he had lost.

Brigadier S. H. Longrigg: Are the Badu of Southern Arabia—similar to those of Northern Arabia—nomadic within limits? Has each tribal group its well-understood limits of migration in terms of movement and duration, or can they go anywhere?

Mr. P. W. Thesiger: That depends to a large extent on the various tribes. The northern tribes are usually very limited in migration: they graze their camels on the salt bushes, which do not die during drought, but they have then to water the camels two or three times a day, and therefore do not move any great distance. The more nomadic tribes, however, will range over one hundred miles questing for the type of desert pasture which springs up here and there after rain. The extent of their migrations often depends on whether there is peace or war between them and their neighbours. If peace prevails they can go into their next-door neighbour's territory; if they are at war they are limited in their movements. Sometimes there is good grazing in the middle of the desert, but no tribe can go there because there happens to be a war between two of the tribes.

One of the tribes I saw on my last journey, the Wahba (one of the biggest of the desert tribes), are very restricted and remain always within their own particular area. Certain of the tribes may range further than others. The widest ranging tribes are probably those living on the sands, whereas those who live on the steppes and round the mountains are much more restricted in their migrations.

The Chairman said: On your behalf I wish to thank Mr. Thesiger for what he has told us. Since he has said that he can stay with us for three months and with the Badu for nine, there is little more than I can add. (Laughter.) I feel sure, however, that Mr. Thesiger is absolutely right in that. I can only hope, Mr. Thesiger, that when you go back to Southern Arabia you will enjoy your sojourn there as much as you did on your recent visit, and that when you return to England you will stay a little more than three months with us.

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*Abdullah Bin Nura, Sheikh of the Bin Ma'aruf, plaits a rope for use at Mamrakh well. Such sheiks do not think it beneath their dignity to help with watering and other everyday tasks*

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